

Without Free Media, Everyone Suffers

By Staff Writer Jane Morse



Tara Sonenshine

Washington — “Media freedom is the moral equivalent of oxygen; it is how society breathes and it is a key pillar of building civil societies,” says Tara Sonenshine, the new U.S. under secretary of state for public diplomacy.

Sonenshine, who has worked as a journalist, said she has seen the occupational hazards journalists must face. When the free flow of

news and information is cut off, she said, “societies suffer. Economies suffer. Individuals suffer.”

Sonenshine joined Michael Posner, Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, for a special briefing April 18 at the Foreign Press Center in Washington to discuss the “Free the Press” campaign in the run-up to World Press Freedom Day on May 3.

The “Free the Press” campaign focuses on the many ways in which journalists around the world are under duress, ranging from laws restricting freedom of expression on the Internet, to intimidation, threats and fines, to mysterious and frightening “disappearances.”

Posner noted that the Committee to Protect Journalists — an independent organization devoted to defending journalists — reports that the number of journalists detained in the last 11 years has actually increased, from 118 journalists in 2001 to 179 imprisoned today. In 2012 alone, 17 journalists have been killed, according to the committee.

Responding to questions from reporters in Washington representing international media as well as reporters in Africa and New York City who were connected by phone,

Sonenshine acknowledged that traditional news media, under pressure from social media and the Internet, are finding it difficult to develop a sustainable economic model to stay in business. But in the search for economic support, she said, media should not be subject to corporate or government interference.

“Government’s role is as a convener,” Sonenshine said. “We do want to convene and listen to one another about what will enable print, radio, online, new PDA [personal digital assistant] newscasts to survive and thrive so that we have the best in journalism.”

Sonenshine and Posner emphasized that standards for freedom of expression and for free and independent media are defined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and apply to all governments worldwide.



Michael Posner

Free media are also essential for the economic development of a nation, Posner said.

“I think for many years we had a somewhat false debate about the relationship between civil and political rights and economic and social rights,” Posner said. “The reality is that those rights are indivisible.”

Countries trying to build stronger economies need transparency and public debate about economic choices and policies, he said. “Journalistic freedom and freedom of expression enhance the abilities of governments and countries to enjoy economic prosperity and strength,” Posner said.

The American Center

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E-mail: mumbaipublicaffairs@state.gov; Website: <http://mumbai.usconsulate.gov>
Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Monday through Friday)

H O L I D A Y S

May 28 : Memorial Day

A WORD FROM THE CENTER

Our theme this month is press freedom, which I would like to expand a bit to include freedom of expression. Article 19 of the United Nations Charter states: *Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.* In the United States, the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution prohibits Congress, or state legislatures, from passing any statute that abridges freedom of speech or freedom of the press.

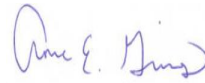
Of course, words on paper are easy; it is much more difficult to apply those words in real life situations. Even in the U.S., the United States Supreme Court has made clear that certain types of speech are not protected by the First Amendment: for example, publishing details about troop movements in wartime. Other exceptions would include restrictions on obscene speech or on so-called fighting words that could predictably incite violence or criminal actions. And the news media are almost always subject to laws of general applicability — that is, laws that apply to everyone but that do not single out the press for special obligations or punishment. For example, laws that prohibit the interception of telephone conversations without permission apply to journalists as much as they do to corporations.

However, even these exceptions are tempered by a strong tradition that there always will be a presumption against any government's attempt to stifle freedom of speech or a free press. As an American judge once wrote, the default position for the press is to publish. Government should bear the burden of justifying any restraints. This formula preserves the watchdog role of the press and facilitates government accountability.

Yet on another note, the Founding Fathers in the U.S. could never have imagined the astonishing reach of the internet in our times, with real-time, immediate, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, freedom of expression coming from the millions who post on Facebook, or tweet on Twitter. Freedom of expression and press freedom in the internet era is one of the most important questions of our times, and something to think long and hard about.

Adapted by Anne Grimes, from the Media Law Handbook, published by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State.

Press Freedom Map - [Click Here](#)



Anne E. Grimes
Public Affairs Officer



Revathi Roy (Founder, For She Ladies Cab Service) was sponsored by the U.S. Government to participate in the Vital Voices of

Ms. Roy receiving her recent award

Asia: Women's Leadership and Training Summit (September 14-17, 2010), a regional summit for women leaders from the East Asia Pacific region, Mainland and Maritime Southeast Asia, and South Asian countries. Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, had announced her support of the Summit during her visit to India in July 2009. Last month, Ms. Roy was awarded the Godfrey Phillips Bravery Amodini Award, dedicated to the economic empowerment of women, recognizing her and her company's enormous courage and commitment in paving the way for a new dimension in providing livelihood for women in India and making them economically independent. Ms. Roy also serves as a Mentor and Chief Driving Officer, VIIRA CABS, and Advisor, Women's Empowerment Projects. Post the Summit, the American Center, Mumbai organized a meeting to encourage Ms. Roy and other participants from Western India to network, and practice what they had learned at the Summit to further women's empowerment.

If you are an alumnus of a United States exchange program and have received special recognition, please send a write-up with 2-3 photos to mumbaipublicaffairs@state.gov.

You could be featured in future e-bulletins!

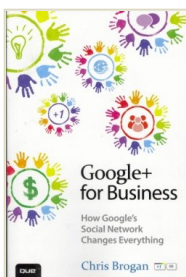
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NOTES FROM THE AMERICAN LIBRARY

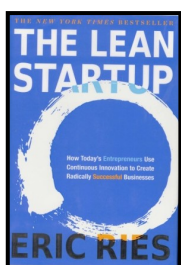
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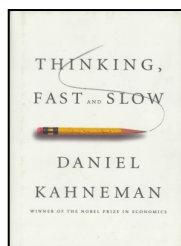
***Google+ for Business: How Google's Social Network Changes Everything* by Chris Brogan. QUE, Indiana, 2012.**

Google+ for Business offers business opportunities available on social network. Author Chris Brogan, media professional speaker and business advisor, shows how get results fast, without wasting time and without wasting a dime. The author guides us using Google+ for promotion, customer service, community building, referrals, collaboration, and whole lot more.



***The Lean Startup: How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to Create Radically Successful Businesses* by Eric Ries. Crown Business, New York, 2011.**

Most startups are built to fail. But those failures, according to entrepreneur Eric Ries, are preventable. Startups don't fail because of bad execution, or missed deadlines, or blown budgets. They fail because they are building something nobody wants says author Ries. The Lean Startup movement is what Ries calls "validated learning" about the customer. It is a way of getting continuous feedback from customers so that the company can shift directions or alter its plans inch by inch, minute by minute. Rather than creating an elaborate business plan and a product-centric approach, Lean Startup prizes testing your vision continuously with your customers and making constant adjustments.



***Thinking, Fast and Slow* by Daniel Kahneman. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 2011**

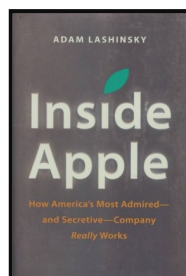
In *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, author Daniel Kahneman, recipient of the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences for his seminal work in psychology, takes us on groundbreaking tour

of the mind and explains the two systems that drive the way we think. Kahneman exposes the extraordinary capabilities – and also the faults and biases – of fast thinking, and reveals the pervasive influence of intuitive impressions on our thoughts and behavior.



***Abundance: The Future is Better Than You Think* by Peter H. Diamandis and Steven Kotler. Free Press, New York, 2012.**

In *Abundance*, authors Peter H. Diamandis and Steven Kotler, document how progress in artificial intelligence, robotics, infinite computing, ubiquitous broadband networks, digital manufacturing, nanomaterials, synthetic biology, and many other exponentially growing technologies will enable us to make greater gains in the next two decades than we have in the previous two hundred years. The authors introduce us to dozens of innovators and industry captains making tremendous strides in each area of water, food, energy, healthcare, education and freedom.



***Inside Apple: How America's Most Admired – and Secretive – Company Really Works* by Adam Lashinsky. Business Plus, New York, 2012**

This book offers exclusive new information about how Apple uses secrecy, accountability, and quirky management structure to ensure that the world's most valuable public company remains as nimble as any start – up. Lashinsky shows how Apple's success confounds many of the general management concepts taught in today's leading business schools.

Other new titles include:

The 4 Essentials of Entrepreneurial Thinking: What Successful People Didn't Learn in School

What Matters Now: How to Win in a World of Relentless Change, Ferocious Competition, and Unstoppable Innovation

The Innovator's Dilemma: The Revolutionary Book That Will Change the Way You Do Business

The Innovator's DNA: Mastering the Five Skills of Disruptive Innovators

The Founder's Dilemmas: Anticipating and Avoiding the Pitfalls That Can Sink a Startup

The End of Money: Counterfeiters, Preachers, Techies, Dreamers--and the Coming Cashless Society



Mumbai Mondays

Media and Press Freedom

a discussion led by Roland Minez

From the founding of the republic in the United States, one of the most cherished principles has been Freedom of the Press. Enshrined in the United States' Bill of Rights, media and press freedom is a key component of the American Political System. Yet, media and press freedom remains an issue that is constantly evolving as American Society changes. Discover the roots and history of Media and Press Freedom in the United States. Learn about major events that have led to debate, disagreement, and crisis concerning such freedom in the United States. Discuss the current state and future of media and press freedom in the US, India, and the World.

Roland Minez is currently serving as a Consular Officer at the U.S. Consulate General in Mumbai. This is his first tour with the State Department. He earned his BS in International Relations from the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York and a Master of Science in International Relations and Global Studies from Troy University. Prior to joining the Foreign Service he served as an Infantry Officer in the US Army in Georgia, Washington, Iraq, Algeria and Key West, Florida.

MAY 21, 2012 AT 6:00 p.m.

Venue:

U.S. Consulate General,
C-49, G Block, Near Trident Hotel,
Bandra-Kurla Complex, Bandra (E), Mumbai - 400 051

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FILM SCREENINGS

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May 5

Citizen Kane

(1941, 119 mins)



A group of reporters who are trying to decipher the last word ever spoke by Charles Foster Kane, the millionaire newspaper tycoon: "Rosebud." The film begins with a news reel detailing Kane's life for the masses, and then from there, we are shown flashbacks from Kane's life. As the reporters investigate further, the viewers see a display of a fascinating man's rise to fame, and how he eventually fell off the "top of the world."

May 12

State of Play

(2009, 128 mins)

A petty thief is gunned down in an alley and a Congressman's assistant falls in front of a subway - two seemingly unrelated deaths. But not to wisecracking, brash newspaper reporter Cal McCaffrey who spies a conspiracy waiting to be uncovered. With a turbulent past connected to the Congressman and the aid of ambitious young rookie writer Della Frye, Cal begins uprooting clues that lead him to a corporate cover-up full of insiders, informants, and assassins. But as he draws closer to the truth, the relentless journalist must decide if it's worth risking his life and selling his soul to get the ultimate story.



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May 19

The Insider

(1999, 157 mins)



Balls-out "60 Minutes" producer Lowell Bergman sniffs a story when a former research biologist for Brown & Williamson, Jeff Wigand, won't talk to him. When the company leans hard on Wigand to honor a confidentiality agreement, he gets his back up. Trusting Bergman and despite a crumbling marriage, he goes on camera for a Mike Wallace interview and risks arrest for contempt of court. Westinghouse is negotiating to buy CBS, so CBS attorneys advise CBS News to shelve

the interview and avoid a lawsuit. "60 Minutes" and CBS News bosses cave, Wigand is hung out to dry, Bergman is compromised, and the CEOs of Big Tobacco may get away with perjury. Will the truth out?

May 26

Nothing But the Truth

(2008, 108 mins)



Thinking Pulitzer Prize and hoping to bring down a President, D.C. political columnist Rachel Armstrong writes that the President ignored the findings of a covert CIA operative when ordering air strikes against Venezuela. Rachel names the agent, Erica Van Doren, a woman whose young daughter is in Rachel's son's class at school. The government moves quickly to force Rachel to name her source. She's jailed for contempt when she refuses. She won't change her mind, and the days add up. Chaos descends on Van Doren's life as well. First Amendment versus national security, marriage and motherhood versus separation. What's the value of a principle?

Screening will start at 2:30 p.m.

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